

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAJ-01 SAM-01 BIB-01 ACDA-05 /071 W

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R 241650Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 811

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 6129

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PGOR, XL, VS, VN/ CH, UR, IT

SUBJECT: SOVIET-ITALIAN POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS ON

SOUTHEAST ASIA

1. A RESPONSIBLE FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL HAS BRIEFED US ON THE FIRST ROUND OF SOVIET-ITALIAN POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS ON SOUTHEAST ASIA WHICH GOT UNDERWAY APRIL 23. THE OPEINING SESSION WAS DEVOTED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO THE CURRENT SITUATION IN VIETNAM. MFA FAR EASTERN EXPERT MIKHAIL KAPITSA CAME FROM MOSCOW TO LEAD THE SOVIET SIDE AT THE TALKS.

2. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, KAPITSA SAID THAT THE PRESENT SAIGON GOVERNMENT HAS TWO CHOICES, EITHER TO RESIGN AND PAVE THE WAY FOR A GOVERNMENT WHICH COULD NEGOTIATE WITH THE PRG OR ELSE TO FACE EARLY DEFEAT ON THE BATTLEFIELD. IN REPLY TO AN ITALIAN QUESTION ON THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO MIGHT LEAD A GOVERNEMENT WITH WHICH THE GRP WOULD BE PREPARED TO DEAL, KAPITSA SUGGESTED "BIG" MINH OR AN EXILE CURRENTLY LIVING IN PARIS.

3. AS FOR THE TYPE OF REGIME THE SOVIETS EXPECT TO EVOLVE IN SAIGON, KAPITSA SPOKE OF A THREE PART COALITION COM-
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PRISING ELEMENTS OF THE PRG, NEUTRALISTS AND ACCEPTABLE

BOURGOISIE. THE SOVIETS DO NOT FORESEE EARLY UNIFICATION OF NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM AND DO NOT THINK SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN THE SOUTH ARE RIPE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOCIALIST STATE, HENCE THEIR BELIEF THAT A "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY" WILL DEVELOP OUT OF THE PRESENT SITUATION.

4. KAPITSA, IN WHAT WAS DESCRIBED TO US AS A RATHER "BRUTAL MANNER", STRONGLY URGED THE ITALIANS TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF THEIR EMBASSY IN SAIGON. DRAWING ON THE SOVIET'S RECENT EXPERIENCE IN PHNOM PENH WHERE THEY HAD A CARETAKER STAFF OF THREE, KAPITSA SAID THE INSURGENTS ARE LIKELY TO BE RATHER UNRULY AND UNDISCIPLINED WHEN THEY EVENTUALLY ARRIVE IN SAIGON. IN PHNOM PENH THE SOVIET MISSION SUFFERED EVEN THOUGH THEY HAD THEIR NATIONAL FLAG FLYING OUTSIDE THEIR ESTABLISHMENT.

5. CONSULTATIONS ON APRIL 24 WILL MOVE TO CONSIDERATION OF CHINA AND OTHER SUBJECTS. AS IN AN ASIDE ON CHINA ON APRIL 23, KAPITSA REMINDED HIS HOSTS THAT RUSSIA HAD ALREADY ONCE SAVED EUROPE FROM A THREAT FROM THE EAST.BEAUDRY

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